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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9400
INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 0754
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0341
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN PRIORITY 0734
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 9096
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2762
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2907

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002339

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IO/UNP J FITZGERALD
AF/E W SCHOFIELD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2017

TAGS: [UNSC](#) [PREL](#) [ET](#) [ER](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: EEBC: ITALY IN AGREEMENT WITH U.S. ON APPROACH
TOWARD NOVEMBER 30 DEADLINE

REF: SECSTATE 153831

Classified By: A/Pol M/C Jonathan Cohen, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche to MFA East Africa Office Director Fabrizio Pignatelli November 15. Poloff sought Italian agreement on a unified approach to avoid pressure on Ethiopia and Eritrea to implement the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) "virtual demarcation" of the border by map coordinates. Pignatelli agreed enthusiastically with our points. He said Italy fully supports UN Under Secretary General Lynn Pascoe's attempts to mediate the conflict, saying it was our best chance for lowering tensions and resolving the disputes between the parties.

¶2. (C) Pignatelli said he thought the conflict now boiled down to a question of face saving for both sides. Given Eritrea's declaration in September that it would begin to remove its military forces from the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) as soon as demarcation begins, Pignatelli saw some room for hope, if enough trust could be restored to allow simultaneous commencement of demarcation on the ground and the removal of Eritrean troops from the TSZ. To supervise such a coordinated, simultaneous action, Pignatelli thought it might be possible to extend the mandate of the EEBC with the consent of both parties.

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